

Every Child Learning Every Day



October 2003

An early childhood newsletter from the State Department of Education

Volume 2, Issue 10

READY TO LEARN

Halloween tales help teach kindness

By Dr. Stan Steiner

Halloween is around the corner. Excitement and sweets are guaranteed, but don't miss the opportunity for teaching about kindness and sharing with the following books.

"Five Ugly Monsters," Tedd Arnold, 1995/2003. Scholastic. Pre K.

Five little monsters jumping on the bed is enough to keep anyone awake, but when one falls off and bumps his head the doctor said ... An unsuspecting ending does the job.

"The Halloween Play," Felicia Bond, 2003. HarperCollins. Pre K. Even though Roger has a small role in the Halloween play his part is one he will never forget. Roger the mouse has the same charm found in Bond's "If You Give a Mouse a Cookie."

"Kat Kong," by David Pilky, 1993, Harcourt, Pre K-4. This hilarious story along with the companion book, "Dogzilla" was reissued in this anniversary year. Guaranteed funny 10 years later by the author of the "Captain Underpants" series.

"Dracula and Frankenstein are Friends," by Katherine Tegen and illustrated by Doug Cushman, 2003. HarperCollins. Pre K-3. Dracula and Frankenstein were friends forever until a little jealousy over who could throw the best Halloween party wedged between them. Can you dislike a good friend forever? What does it take to get back together? How they solve some familiar friendship questions turns into the best party ever.

Dr. Stan Steiner teaches Children's Literature at Boise State University. Find more book reviews at <http://education.boisestate.edu/ssteiner/>.



Help children make good choices

Dear Reader:

The news about the health of the children in our nation has not been good. One report indicates that childhood and adult obesity rates are on the rise. Another report links childhood obesity to asthma. Yet another study suggests that an alarming increase in broken bones in teens may be due to their drinking soda pop instead of milk.

For the past several years, the State Department of Education has been working with schools to integrate lessons in schools about healthy lifestyle choices in nutrition and physical activity.

We are pleased to see the concern about our children's health growing in Idaho. On Oct. 2-3, the department is joining with the Idaho Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance and Action for Healthy Kids Idaho to sponsor Idaho's Healthy Kids Summit.

During the summit, folks will talk about the latest research and how to use



Dr. Marilyn Howard
Superintendent of Public Instruction

it to positively impact the lives of kids.

A child's experiences in the early years of life play a vital role in how he or she will view physical activity and nutrition later in life.

We hope some of you can join us at the summit, but if you can't there are some steps parents and early childhood educators can do today to help support healthy lifestyle in children.

Encourage children to eat more fruits and vegetable.

Cut out sodas and other "empty calorie" drinks.

Make sure your child is getting enough exercise. Page 2 of this newsletter reviews new guidelines for physical activity for children under 5.

Turn off your television, VCR, and DVD players. Fall is perfect time for "nature" walks through your neighborhood or local playground.

Most important, be a good role model. Children learn from the choices they see the adults in their lives make. Good nutrition and physical activity is good for adults, too.

READY TO LEARN

Engage listeners with questions about stories

Read-aloud sessions can help children learn new words and ideas, broaden their knowledge about the world, help them learn to listen, and help them talk in longer sentences.

It is best to read aloud with small groups of three to six children. But reading aloud is not enough by itself. When reading aloud you need to use a variety of good books and engage children before, during and after reading.

One way to engage young listeners of the stories is through questions. The next time you read read "Goldilocks and the Three Bears" aloud, try:

Questions that focus on past and future events such as:

****Do you think the Three Bears had ever gone for a walk in the woods before?**

****What will Goldilocks tell her family when she returns home?**

Questions that analyze cause and effect such as:



three bears house?

****How did Baby Bear's chair break?**

Questions that encourage thinking about issues or themes such as:

****What should you do if you break something that belongs to someone else?**

****How do you know this is a make-believe story?**

****What if Goldilocks had tried on the Bears' shoes? How would the story tell about that?**

Questions that examine words and word meanings such as:

****The story has lots of opposite words—words that are as different**

****Why did the three bears go for a walk in the woods?**

****Why did Goldilocks go inside the**

as different can be. Hard and soft. Hot and cold, big and little. What is the opposite of up? Of black?

****Goldilocks was curious about the house of the three bears and so she went inside. What does curious mean? Do we know any other curious book characters?**

****The three bears eat porridge for breakfast. What is porridge?**

****Do you eat porridge at your house? What do you eat that is like porridge?**

Questions that analyze characters feelings, personality traits and motivations such as:

****Why do you think Goldilocks decides to go into a stranger's house?**

****Goldilocks ate Baby Bear's food, broke his chair, and slept in his bed. How do you think Baby Bear feels when he meets Goldilocks?**



RESOURCES

Precautions make for a safe Halloween

From the National Safety Council, www.nsc.org

Halloween is a fall tradition but the excitement of the night can cause children to forget to be careful. There is no real "trick" to making Halloween a real treat for the entire family.

Both children and adults need to think about safety on this annual day of make-believe.

Costumes

Only fire-retardant materials should be used for costumes.

Costumes should be loose so warm clothes can be worn underneath.

Costumes should not be so long that they are a tripping hazard. (Falls are the leading cause of unintentional injuries on Halloween.)

If children are allowed out after dark, outfits should be made with light colored materials. Strips of retroreflective tape should be used to make children visible.

Masks & Makeup

Face Design Masks can obstruct a child's vision. Use facial make-up instead.

When buying special Halloween makeup, check for packages containing ingredients that are labeled "Made with U.S. Approved Color Additives," "Laboratory Tested," "Meets Federal Standards for Cosmetics," or "Non-Toxic."

Follow manufacturer's instruction for application. If masks are worn, they should have nose and mouth openings and large eye holes.

Accessories

Knives, swords and other accessories should be made from cardboard or flexible materials.

Do not allow children to carry sharp objects.

Bags or sacks carried by youngsters should be light-colored or trimmed with retro-reflective tape if children are allowed out after dark.

Carrying flashlights will help children see better and be seen more clearly.

Treats

Give children an early meal before going out.

Insist that treats be brought home for inspection before anything is eaten.

Wash fruit and slice into small pieces.

When in doubt, throw it out.

NUTRITION

Iron is an important part of children's, adults' diets

Iron is an important part of everyone's diet. Children need enough iron to support his or her rapid growth, to replace iron that the body uses up and to have enough energy to learn and play.



Iron-deficiency anemia is a common nutrition problem for young children. Checking for anemia should be part of your child's regular health exam. If you are not sure your child is getting enough iron, ask his or her health provider.

Part of ensuring that children

get enough of this mineral is to make sure their diet and yours includes iron-rich foods in meals and snacks.

Good sources of iron include:

- **Lean meat
- **Iron-enriched and whole-grain breads and cereals
- **Cooked dried beans (black, kidney, lima, navy, pinto, soy beans)
- **Greens (collard, kale, mustard, spinach, turnip green)
- **Chicken, egg yolks, and dried fruit (raisins, apricots) have iron, too, but not as much.

Great Pairing

The body uses iron from meat and chicken better than iron from beans, grain products, vegetables, dried fruit, and egg

yolks. Good news: vitamin C helps the body use the iron from meats, so try serving some of these pairings that combine foods with iron and foods with vitamin C

- **Breakfast cereal with berries or juice
- **Peanut butter with a tangerine
- **Kidney beans in chili with tomato sauce
- **Hard-cooked egg and orange juice
- **Pasta salad with bell peppers

Information provided by "Nibbles for Health." Nutrition Newsletter for Parents of Young Children, USDA 2002

READY TO LEARN

'Capturing' numbers aids recognition skills

From www.perpetualpreschool.com/mathideas.html

Number Capture

Using the "Slap Jack" card game concept, children can have fun learning number recognition. The number capture activity works best in small groups.

Materials: Make or purchase a set of number cards 0 through 10, or higher. Make a game board by writing the numerals 1 through 10 on a piece of paper to keep track of which numerals you've already captured.

How to play: The dealer decides which number

will be captured first and marks it on the game board with a bingo marker making sure all players see what they will be watching for.

The dealer then holds the shuffled cards face down and tosses them face up in front of the players.

When the selected number is spotted, the first player to capture it by smacking it with his or her hand wins the card.

Play continues until all cards have been captured. The person with the most cards gets to be the dealer next.

This game can also be used with shapes, colors, alphabet, etc.

ACTIVITIES

Guidelines detail need for physical activity

Confining babies and young children to strollers, play pens, car and infant seats for hours at a time, may delay development such as rolling over, crawling, walking and even cognitive development. According to the National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) such restrictions can begin the path to sedentary preferences and childhood obesity.

NASPE released new guidelines for physical activities for children under the age of 5. Below are some of the groups recommendations. For more information visit: www.aahperd.org

For infants, from birth to 12 months

**Brightly colored, easy-to-grasp toys that can be squeezed or have different textures encourage reaching and grasping.

**A baby just starting to learn to roll over may be motivated to keep trying if parents wave a favorite toy just out of reach.

**Provide at least a 5-by-7-foot blanket for playing, rolling and other large-muscle activities, and later, a safe area to explore while crawling.

Toddlers, ages 12 months to 36 months

**Bounce, throw and chase balls to develop hand-eye coordination.

**Dancing to music and follow-along songs promote body awareness and balance.

**Stair climbing develops leg muscles and coordination, but should be taught on carpeted steps with an adult to prevent falls.

Preschoolers, ages 3 to 5 years

**Help the child walk along a line on the ground or, in a safe area not around cars, along a sidewalk curb, to promote balance.

**Lay out objects to create a maze or tell a child to run around a tree and back, providing vigorous exercise plus mastering turns and balance.

**Around age 3, children learn to hop. Ask the child to hop first on one foot, then the other, promoting balance and strengthening leg muscles. Promote different rhythms by asking them to skip, learned around age 4.

**Games should be noncompetitive. Preschoolers lack the social and cognitive development for organized team sports.